c/ the Little Comp of Mary
Calvary Nursing Home
Sudbury Hill
Harrow-on-the-~~Hill~~ Hill
Middlesex England.

June 9th–11th 1974.

Dearest René

It is a great goodness, a very great ~~[illegible]~~ goodness & kindness in you to send the the letter re/the de La Taille thing — I very nearly tore my ~~[illegible]~~ half illegible meandering messed-up scrawl. For I felt it unfair to bother you with the matter, so I feel particularly grateful to you for this clear & detailed answer, giving also the authorities — I do appreciate that & the sweat that stands behind ~~[illegible]~~ it. Many, many thanks, or Diolch yn fawr iawn — as they say in Welsh.

diolch = thanks yn = in, fawr mutation of mawr = great, & iawn = very.

~~[illegible]~~. *

Diolch yn fawr iawn ~~[illegible]~~ could well be ~~[illegible]~~ the translat of these Vernacular ~~Mass~~ boys to stand for Gratias agamus (Domino Deo nostro) but I expect they'd prefer 'Thanks a lot.'

And I've still to thank you very very Greatly for the most careful ~~explanatory~~ explanatory, word by word of my beloved Six Dukes

The odd thing was that I had in the back of my mind ~~that~~ about ~~the~~ the dukes standing ~~[illegible]~~ before him & the twelve ~~[illegible]~~ that razed him from the ~~[illegible]~~ gon ~~[illegible]~~, but I can't imagine where I go got ~~that~~ from. but I didn't like it very much the switch to 'Lords' I feel that twelve dukes ~~[illegible]~~ were too many for the job whereas six would be ~~[illegible]~~ more like, ~~twelve~~ ~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~
& six
~~[illegible]~~

the nine lords
that followed
after him in the
black mourning gown.

Black was the mourning & white was ~~the~~ their wand
and see (sic so) yaller was the flamboys that they carried in their hand.

that rang a bell, heaven knows where from, for I recall hearing the Six Dukes only fr Fr J O'Connor &, later, from Eric.

I know that "they go like that — like bleedin' lead" (somewhere in I.P.) but somehow I prefer the six ~~[illegible]~~ dukes to go before him — the six dukes to raise him from the ground & ~~six~~ dukes to follow after ~~[illegible]~~ him. Anyway again I thank you dearest René for checking up on the whole matter & the pronunciation so subtly differing in its vowel-sounds throughout. — and very remarkably — I was sorry to see that 'what they carries in the hand' goes by the board —

Now about the de la T. thing. I'm glad the greek letters were in Latin for as I have so very 'little Latin and ~~[illegible]~~ no Greek' or rather I never can ~~[illegible]~~ recall more than a few 'lower-case' Greek letters. Greek Caps I can more often follow. I have in the room Liddell & Scott but owing to this blockheaded inability to remember the lower-case letters, I sometimes spend hours & hours trying to find the spelling of some word I want.

I remember how delighted I was when writing The Wall, I wanted to use the word 'buccinators' & for some reason I wished to know the Greek word for trumpeters — may be because Lewis & Short gives bucina as deriving from the Greek ~~[illegible]~~ & ~~[illegible]~~ I wondered if there was some way suggesting that waxed-moustached feeling that, apart from sergeant-majors ~~& some privates left over from~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~of the Boer War army~~ & some other NCOs who have served in the Boer War & were now ~~with~~ along us in the 1914-18 affair, there were bandsmen in my mob, who retained the ~~fashion~~ Regular Army fashion. ~~in beards~~

Anyway, in Liddell & Scott, I chanced upon 'lancer-whiskered buccinators' — it seemed too good to be true, ~~for~~ it had the exact feeling I wanted, — merely had to slip in 'bloody' & the ~~last~~ bottom lines of page 22 of Faber's The Sleeping Lord etc were given me for a plate.

tremendous the dialectical locality changes vis mixed with 'standard', English ~~[illegible]~~

There was for example, the bandsman who plays the large drum, Marx by name, middle aged with whom I shared a room in a billet in Llandudno early in 1915. He was an inveterate drinker & as I had to ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ wake till he come in very late always smoking a cigar ~~and~~ he refused to put out before he was in bed & ~~I~~ feared ~~that~~ the ash from his cigar would set the bed on fire but it was no use. When I thought he really was asleep I would walk across the room to where his corner was, but he always heard me & would not allow me to remove cigar. He used nearly always when he came into the room, say: "Gounod, Gounod — what a musician! — & always drunk, thank God, ?"

~~[illegible]~~ So glad that dearest Joan's sprained ankle is much better, but she should take care for a bit – Anyway no R.S.C. to ~~[illegible]~~ bawl out ③ "Put that stick down."

But owing to having been such a dunderhead at recalling Greek lower case (in particular) & spelling in general whether English, Latin, Welsh, ~~a~~ French, Jerry-lingo or any lingo you care to think of, it makes the labour of ~~writing spelling~~ spelling the word I want appallingly complicated. When I was in my dugout I had an elementary N.T. Greek grammar & it has in it the Greek ~~alphabet~~ alphabet in Caps. and lower-case, which was at least a help.

I do think your piece made for that New Blackfriars splendid, I don't deserve ~~it~~ it, not by a long chalk, but anyhow I do think it bloody good so far that also. Diolch yn fawr iawn i chwi. ~~They pl~~ (i chwi = to you)

If, The New B. does not ~~de~~ I think deserve it ~~[illegible]~~ but may be thinks cutting. Anyway insist they print it in full or not at all.

part of my prejudice at the 'left-wing' thing. May be they have become more balanced.

Very glad you liked the sentry on the ramparts of La Haille Taillée castle saying ~~to~~ to his mate "list hereabouts / no wiseman's son born do know / not in these ~~whom~~ whoreson March-lands of this Welshry."

I think I used it because it recalls for me those chaps – soldiers in that mob ~~only~~ with Bulcalf, Wart & Poins in Shakespeare's Henry VI or Henry IV or V.

You know, of course the ~~Xtop~~ Xristopher Dawson was born in Hay ~~Castle~~ Castle. He was Welsh on his maternal side & spoke of the enclave of chaps not reckoning themselves English or Welsh ~~[illegible]~~ separate in some way. You know ~~how~~ with what genius he could describe these complex but very real ~~subtle~~ differencies. But he had on the Welsh side a grandmother or aunt, can't remember which, ~~or~~ who spent half a life-time tracing back ~~to~~ the genealogical ~~[illegible]~~ ~~of~~ connections of the family – I've forgotten the name, but ~~recent~~ who came across a Welshman recently who knew of this old lady but had not seemed to realize that Xristopher D. was from The Hay.* God! I was distressed when Bernadine Wall phoned one ~~day~~ evening to tell ~~me~~ me that her father

*Interesting how the ~~[illegible]~~ local chaps even in our time retained the definite article & talked about The Hay. Been trying to think of similar examples in Eng. place-names. It is frequent in certain Welsh place-names, for example Barry • not far from Cardiff is always in Welsh Y Barri, 'The Barri' – Barri being a Norman family name as e.g. Gerald de Barri

④

had died the previous day (a Thursday) & that they felt, knowing my close friendship with dear Bernard that I ought to be told lest I should hear from some obituary. I can't take it in yet – in fact it's terribly difficult to 'believe' that death has removed a person so close to one in feeling.

By chance I had not seen him for some while because he was unwell but twice very shortly before his death I had come over here, once with Cathleen Raine & then one the after when you were here, he was a very remarkable bloke, much more learned & perceptive too, than was generally understood. –

Kit Dawson's daughter, Christina, came to see me & she has written a little piece about him as a letter to the Catholic Herald.

Must stop dear René, Lord I did enjoy tremendously seeing you again – thank you exceedingly for managing to get out here three times during your brief visit.

William Cookson came on Sunday afternoon with a girl who lives I think with Cathleen Raine. they had managed to get to that Mermaid Theatre thing & said you were by far the best and free & to the point. They were sorry that not much of ~~the~~ stuff was from my recordings, but by actors – but that no the less they enjoyed it.

Must really stop now or this will not get posted.

Very very much love to dear Joan, she must think it bloody of me for not answering her letter, but tell her I will as soon as possible. I've not yet written a letter to Louis Bonnerot's widow who wrote so kindly to me telling me of Professor Bonnerot's death.

I'm trying to get on with further bits of 'the Kensington Mass' but making slow progress.

Blessings on you both.

With very much love

Dai.

Glad Joan liked 'Put that stick down' – I marvel now how I was so stupid after 3 years in the Army to say to a R.S.M. quite flatly 'No sir.' but I think I was so angry with the set-ups of what is now called 'bull' & all the rest of it. God! they did pile it on at Limerick, because it was thought that those who had been in ~~France or~~ the actual fighting in France or elsewhere, required some smartening up. But I'm glad I spent those couple of months in that place, otherwise I should never have seen the astonishing girl in red skirt driving a red cow in a red sunset – it was an absolutely prehistoric Celtic sight.

Oh, I couldn't make out what on yr letter of 22 May, after 'Dearest Dai' you say leofa Dai ~~& ask~~ – Correct?

I can't trace leofa in the Welsh dictionary, or is it a Goidelic Celtic word?

it's a quite possible Welsh form: I mean the ending fa is a frequent ending e.g. ~~gwaithfa~~ gweithfa a workshop & gwynfa, paradise. there may be a Welsh word leeofa it would be pronounced lee-o-va, but can't find such a word

9-11/6/74

Lancer-whiskered
buccinators

(‘Gounod, Gounod
..... & always drunk,
thank you!)

(given on a plate)